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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

July 12, 1969

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE


SUBJECT: Law of the Sea and Related Subjects

I agree with the view you expressed in your memorandum of July 9 that the NSC need not at this time consider the order of priority to be given to our positions on the various issues involved in this complicated subject.

I also believe, however, that there are several problems raised by Secretary Laird's memorandum of July 1 which warrant consideration of these issues together at a high level.

- There are potential conflicts between the US position on the law of the sea treaty and US policies on resolution of the fishing rights dispute, a definition of the boundary between the continental shelf and the deep seabeds, and the prospective seabeds arms control agreement.
- There are differences between DOD, State, and Interior on the existence or likelihood of such conflicts and differences on how to resolve them.
- In the event that such conflicts exist or arise and cannot be resolved in a manner satisfactory to DOD, State, and Interior, judgments should be made about the relative importance, or priority, of obtaining one international agreement or the other.

Therefore, I have suggested to Elliot Richardson that the Under Secretaries Committee review these problems as soon as possible, so that there is an opportunity to resolve these issues at that level.

  
Henry A. Kissinger